

CLAIMS:

What is claimed is:

- 5 1. A method in a data processing system for an organization to provide anonymity to a user, the method comprising the data processing system implemented steps of:
- receiving a request from the user for an anonymous identity;
- generating the anonymous identity for the user, wherein the anonymous identity includes contact information for the organization;
- 10 associating the anonymous identity with the user, wherein the user uses the anonymous identity to provide information on a network data processing system;
- receiving a contact directed to the anonymous identity; and
- selectively forwarding the contact to the user based on a policy.
- 15 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the data processing system is a Web server.
3. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
- billing the user for the anonymous identity.
- 20 4. The method of claim 3, wherein the user is billed on a monthly basis.
5. The method of claim 3, wherein the user is billed for each contact forwarded to the user.
- 25 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the anonymous identity is valid for a selected period of time.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the period of time is selected by the user.
8. The method of claim 1, wherein forwarding of contacts to the user based on the
5 policy ceases when the anonymous identity is invalid.
9. The method of claim 1, wherein the contact information includes at least one of a
voice telephone number, a facsimile telephone number, and e-mail address, a pager
number, and mailing address.
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10. The method of claim 1, wherein the profile specifies a type of contact that is to be
forwarded.
11. The method of claim 10, wherein the type of contact includes at least one of a
15 voice message, an e-mail message, and physical mail.
12. The method of claim 10, wherein the type of contact is a time when a contact is
received.
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13. The method of claim 1, wherein the profile causes selected contacts to be held and
forwarded to the user at a selected time.
14. A method in a data processing system for providing anonymity to a user, the
method comprising the data processing system implemented steps of:
- 25 receiving a contact, wherein the contact includes an identification of an entity;

comparing the identification of an entity in the contact to a database of aliases;
and

responsive to identifying the user, selectively forwarding the contact to the user
based on a policy.

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15. The method of claim 14, wherein the policy specifies an event causing the contact
to be forwarded.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the event is a periodic event.

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17. The method of claim 15, wherein the event is at least one of a selected time, a
selected day, and a particular mode of contact.

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18. The method of claim 17, wherein the mode of contact is at least one of voice
message, an e-mail message, a page, and physical mail.

19. The method of claim 14 further comprising:
billing the user.

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20. The method of claim 14, wherein the database of aliases includes a set of entries.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein each entry within the set of entries includes an
alias, a user identification; and a policy used to selectively forward contacts to the user.

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22. A data processing system comprising:
a bus system;
a communications unit connected to the bus system;

a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the memory includes as set of instructions; and

a processing unit connected to the bus system, wherein the processing unit executes the set of instructions to receive a request from the user for an anonymous identity; generate the anonymous identity for the user, wherein the anonymous identity includes contact information for the organization; associate the anonymous identify with the user, wherein the user uses the anonymous identity to provide information on a network data processing system; receive a contact directed to the anonymous identity; and selectively forward the contact to the user based on a policy.

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23. The data processing system of claim 22, wherein the data processing system is a Web server.

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24. The data processing system of claim 22, wherein the processor unit further executes the set of instructions to bill the user for the anonymous identity.

25. The data processing system of claim 24, wherein the user is billed on a monthly basis.

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26. The data processing system of claim 24, wherein the user is billed for each contact forwarded to the user.

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27. The data processing system of claim 22, wherein the anonymous identity is valid for a selected period of time.

28. The data processing system of claim 27, wherein the period of time is selected by the user.

29. The data processing system of claim 22, wherein forwarding of contacts to the user based on the policy ceases when the anonymous identity is invalid.

5 30. The data processing system of claim 22, wherein the contact information includes at least one of a voice telephone number, a facsimile telephone number, and e-mail address, a pager number, and mailing address.

10 31. The data processing system of claim 22, wherein the profile specifies a type of contact that is to be forwarded.

32. The data processing system of claim 31, wherein the type of contact includes at least one of a voice message, an e-mail message, and physical mail.

15 33. The data processing system of claim 31, wherein the type of contact is a time when a contact is received.

34. The data processing system of claim 22, wherein the profile causes selected contacts to be held and forwarded to the user at a selected time.

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35. A data processing system comprising:
a bus system;
a communications unit connected to the bus system;
a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the memory includes as set of
25 instructions; and
a processing unit connected to the bus system, wherein the processing unit executes the set of instructions to receive a contact, wherein the contact includes an identification of an entity; compare the identification of an entity in the contact to a

database of aliases; and selectively forward the contact to the user based on a policy in response to identifying the user.

36. The data processing system of claim 35, wherein the policy specifies an event
5 causing the contact to be forwarded.

37. The data processing system of claim 36, wherein the event is a periodic event.

38. The data processing system of claim 36, wherein the event is at least one of a
10 selected time, a selected day, and a particular mode of contact.

39. The data processing system of claim 38, wherein the mode of contact is at least
one of voice message, an e-mail message, a page, and physical mail.

40. The data processing system of claim 35, wherein the processing unit further
15 execute the set of instructions to bill the user.

41. The data processing system of claim 35, wherein the database of aliases includes a
set of entries.
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42. The data processing system of claim 41, wherein each entry within the set of
entries includes an alias, a user identification; and a policy used to selectively forward
contacts to the user.

43. A data processing system for an organization to provide anonymity to a user,
25 comprising:

first receiving means for receiving a request from the user for an anonymous identity;

generating means for generating the anonymous identity for the user, wherein the anonymous identity includes contact information for the organization;

5 associating means for associating the anonymous identity with the user, wherein the user uses the anonymous identify to provide information on a network data processing system;

second receiving means for receiving a contact directed to the anonymous identity; and

10 forwarding means for selectively forwarding the contact to the user based on a policy.

44. The data processing system of claim 43, wherein the data processing system is a Web server.

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45. The data processing system of claim 44 further comprising:
billing means for billing the user for the anonymous identity.

46. The data processing system of claim 45, wherein the user is billed on a monthly
20 basis.

47. The data processing system of claim 45, wherein the user is billed for each contact forwarded to the user.

25 48. The data processing system of claim 44, wherein the anonymous identity is valid for a selected period of time.

49. The data processing system of claim 48, wherein the period of time is selected by the user.

5 50. The data processing system of claim 43, wherein forwarding of contacts to the user based on the policy ceases when the anonymous identity is invalid.

51. The data processing system of claim 43, wherein the contact information includes at least one of a voice telephone number, a facsimile telephone number, and e-mail
10 address, a pager number, and mailing address.

52. The data processing system of claim 52, wherein the profile specifies a type of contact that is to be forwarded.

15 53. The data processing system of claim 52, wherein the type of contact includes at least one of a voice message, an e-mail message, and physical mail.

54. The data processing system of claim 43, wherein the type of contact is a time when a contact is received.

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55. The data processing system of claim 43, wherein the profile causes selected contacts to be held and forwarded to the user at a selected time.

56. A data processing system for providing anonymity to a user comprising:
25 receiving means for receiving a contact, wherein the contact includes an identification of an entity;

comparing means for comparing the identification of an entity in the contact to a database of aliases; and

forwarding means, responsive to identifying the user, for selectively forwarding the contact to the user based on a policy.

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57. The data processing system of claim 56, wherein the policy specifies an event causing the contact to be forwarded.

58. The data processing system of claim 57, wherein the event is a periodic event.

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59. The data processing system of claim 57, wherein the event is at least one of a selected time, a selected day, and a particular mode of contact.

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60. The data processing system of claim 59, wherein the mode of contact is at least one of voice message, an e-mail message, a page, and physical mail.

61. The data processing system of claim 56 further comprising:
billing means for billing the user.

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62. The data processing system of claim 56, wherein the database of aliases includes a set of entries.

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63. The data processing system of claim 62, wherein each entry within the set of entries includes an alias, a user identification; and a policy used to selectively forward contacts to the user.

64. A computer program product in a computer readable medium an organization to provide anonymity to a user, the computer program product comprising:

first instructions for receiving a request from the user for an anonymous identity;

and

5 second instructions for generating the anonymous identity for the user, wherein the anonymous identity includes contact information for the organization;

third instructions for associating the anonymous identity with the user, wherein the user uses the anonymous identify to provide information on a network data processing system;

10 fourth instructions for receiving a contact directed to the anonymous identity; and
fifth instructions for selectively forwarding the contact to the user based on a policy.

15 65. The computer program product of claim 64, wherein the data processing system is a Web server.

66. The computer program product of claim 64 further comprising:
sixth instructions for billing the user for the anonymous identity.

20 67. The computer program product of claim 66, wherein the user is billed on a monthly basis.

68. The computer program product of claim 66, wherein the user is billed for each contact forwarded to the user.

69. The computer program product of claim 64, wherein the anonymous identity is valid for a selected period of time.

5 70. The computer program product of claim 69, wherein the period of time is selected by the user.

71. The computer program product of claim 64, wherein forwarding of contacts to the user based on the policy ceases when the anonymous identity is invalid.

10 72. The computer program product of claim 64, wherein the contact information includes at least one of a voice telephone number, a facsimile telephone number, and e-mail address, a pager number, and mailing address.

15 73. The computer program product of claim 73, wherein the profile specifies a type of contact that is to be forwarded.

74. The computer program product of claim 73, wherein the type of contact includes at least one of a voice message, an e-mail message, and physical mail.

20 75. The computer program product of claim 64, wherein the type of contact is a time when a contact is received.

76. The computer program product of claim 64, wherein the profile causes selected contacts to be held and forwarded to the user at a selected time.

77. A computer program product in a computer readable medium for providing anonymity to a user, the computer program product comprising:
- first instructions for receiving a contact, wherein the contact includes an identification of an entity;
- 5 second instructions for comparing the identification of an entity in the contact to a database of aliases; and
- third instructions, responsive to identifying the user, for selectively forwarding the contact to the user based on a policy.
- 10 78. The computer program product of claim 77, wherein the policy specifies an event causing the contact to be forwarded.
79. The computer program product of claim 78, wherein the event is a periodic event.
- 15 80. The computer program product of claim 78, wherein the event is at least one of a selected time, a selected day, and a particular mode of contact.
81. The computer program product of claim 80, wherein the mode of contact is at least one of voice message, an e-mail message, a page, and physical mail.
- 20 82. The computer program product of claim 77 further comprising:
- fourth instructions for billing the user.
83. The computer program product of claim 77, wherein the database of aliases
- 25 includes a set of entries.

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